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CAMCD COMMENTS ON HEALTH CANADA CORRESPONDENCE

Federal government out of step with realities on the ground

September 11, 2015 - - Today, the Canadian Association of Medical Cannabis Dispensaries (CAMCD) has confirmed some of the oldest dispensaries in North America were among those that received a letter from Health Canada threatening legal action. Consistent lack of leadership and inaction from the federal government on this issue has led to municipalities stepping in and creating their own regulations for these vital institutions. Dispensaries have been doing their best to comply with these regulations. These dispensaries, and CAMCD, have been requesting inclusion in a comprehensive regulatory framework since their inceptions, this threatening application of the NCR and FDA is not constructive and harms patient access and care.

The work of dispensaries has been upheld by the Canadian courts, recommended by the Senate, commended by Parliament and three dispensary pioneers have been awarded diamond jubilee medals for their important contributions to Canada. For almost two decades these dispensaries have been transparent in their conduct with their local police forces and have been supported by their communities.

"The current Federal government is ignoring all of those well-informed bodies by threatening dispensaries with massive fines and jail time if they do not abandon their patients within two weeks, patients they have been supporting for almost twenty years". CAMCD President Jamie Shaw said, "It would be unconscionable for these dispensaries to do so, and it is unconscionable Health Canada has asked them to."

The current federal regulations for medical cannabis, the MMPR, do not currently serve the needs of all patients, and dispensaries still fill many important gaps. "It is distressing that the Conservative government would choose to address the holes in their system by taking this dramatic and unprecedented action," Shaw said, "without actually addressing the needs of the very sick and suffering patients they have already failed."

CAMCD is a non-profit trade association for medical cannabis dispensaries founded in 2011. Their Dispensary Certification Program is a rigorous accreditation program developed in part with the support of the UBC SEED Project, and funded by a Peter Wall Solutions Initiative.

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